



Montgomery County Council

From the Office of Council President Valerie Ervin

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Montgomery Council President Valerie Ervin Urges Celebration of 'Food Day'

**Leader of County's Efforts to Create Community Gardens
Supports Oct. 24 Day to Encourage Healthy Eating**

ROCKVILLE, Md., October 24, 2011—Montgomery County Council President Valerie Ervin, who has led the County's efforts to create community gardens, today joined those around the nation who are celebrating "Food Day." Food Day seeks to bring together Americans from all walks of life to push for healthy, affordable food produced in a sustainable, humane way.

Food Day is backed by an advisory board that includes anti-hunger advocates, physicians, authors, politicians and leaders of groups whose focus ranges from farmers markets to animal welfare to public health.

Food Day organizers and participants have pledged to work with people around the country to create thousands of events in homes, schools, churches, farmers markets, city halls and state capitals. Food Day encourages creation of good-tasting meals built around vegetables, fruits and whole grains.

"Food Day seeks to inspire people all over the County, and the nation, to celebrate healthy—and delicious—eating choices," said Council President Ervin. "The goal is to get people to 'Eat Real.' Eating Real means centering your diet on fresh foods and buying fewer packaged foods. It also is a day to support the local farms and farmers that produce them."

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Food Day falls in line with Council President Ervin's drive to create community gardens so that people around Montgomery County would have the ability to grow their own food—even if they live in areas of the County that are becoming more urbanized.

"Food Day complements one of my most successful initiatives, which has been to create community gardens," said Council President Ervin. "I am thrilled that seven sites in parks and two sites on Montgomery County Public Schools property have opened since 2009 that allow people who ordinarily would not have access to a garden plot to start growing their own fruits and vegetables. This initiative has become so popular there is currently a waiting list for communities wanting a community garden."

On Oct. 18, Council President Ervin presented a Council proclamation recognizing Oct. 24 as Food Day—a special day that supports efforts like the creation of community gardens.

"The benefits of community gardens are clear: They enhance the lives of residents by providing hands-on food production, they promote social interactions among neighbors, and more importantly, they encourage residents to eat healthy," said Council President Ervin. "This is a program where everyone wins—and that is what Food Day is about."

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) are the honorary co-chairs for Food Day 2011. The day is sponsored by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), the nonprofit watchdog group that has led successful fights for food labeling, better nutrition and safer food since 1971. CSPI, does not accept funding from government or corporations.

To learn more about Food Day, go to the Food Day Web site at <http://foodday.org/about-food-day>.

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